

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KHARTO 00777 230542Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
TRSE-00 OMB-01 IO-13 /083 W
-----125758 230832Z /17

R 221020Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6611
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
DIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 0777

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, PINS, SU, SHUM
SUBJ: SUDANESE ELECTIONS TO NATIONAL PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY

1. SUDAN HAS JUST COMPLETED WEEK OF BALLOTING FOR NATIONAL PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY AND WINNING CANDIDATES ARE BEING ANNOUNCED. NEWLY-REORGANIZED ASSEMBLY WILL HAVE 304 MEMBERS OF WHOM 30 WILL BE APPOINTED BY NIMEIRI. EACH OF 18 PROVINCIAL COUNCILS INSUDAN ELECTED TWO MEMBERS FRO ADDITIONAL 36 SEATS. FIVE SOCIAL GROUPS (FARMERS, WORKERS, SOLDIERS, CAPITALISTS AND PROFESSIONALS/INTELLECTUALS) HAVE ELECTED 48 MEMBERS. PROVINCIAL ASSOCIATIONS FOR WOMEN, YOUTH AND VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT ELECTED 54 SEATS. REMAINING 136 SEATS WERE FILLED FROM GEOGRAPHIC CONSTITUENCIES. COMPLICATED REGISTRATION PROCEDURES AND INEFFICIENT RECORD KEEPING DELAYED BALLOTING, PROBABLY NEUTRALIZED FRAUD, AND MAY HAVE MADE ELECTION MORE DEMOCRATIC THAN INTENDED. VOTING WAS PEACEFUL THROUGHOUT
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PAGE 02 KHARTO 00777 230542Z

COUNTRY. SOUTHERN REGIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTION WAS DELAYED AND WILL BE REPORTED SEPARATELY.
2. RESULTS OF FIRST POLITICAL CAMPAIGN SINCE NATIONAL RECONCILIATION APPEAR TO BE GENERALLY UNSATISFACTORY TO SUDAN SOCIALIST UNION, SOLE LEGAL POLITICAL PARTY AND ORGANIZATION RESPONSIBLE FOR CONDUCT OF ELECTION AND PERHAPS TO NIMEIRI AS WELL. IN ABSENCE OF POLITICAL PARTIES, MOST CANDIDATES

HAVE TO HAVE SUFFICIENT FINANCIAL AND SOCIAL RESOURCES OF THEIR OWN TO COMPETE SUCCESSFULLY. MANY FORMER POLITICIANS RAN FOR OFFICE ON STRENGTH OF PREVIOUS PROMINENCE, AND OTHER CANDIDATES WERE SONS OF LOCAL CHIEFS, LOCAL CIVIC OFFICIALS, AND SOCIAL LEADERS. TWO OR THREE FORMER CABINET MINISTERS HAVE WON, INCLUDING FORMER MININTERIOR SADIQ BELLA, WHO WAS SENTENCED TO DEATH FOLLOWING JULY 76 COUP ATTEMPT. MOSLEM BROTHERS AND PERSONS WITH WELL-KNOWN CONSERVATIVE ISLAMIC VIEWS OBTAINED 15 TO 20 SEATS NATIONALLY, INCLUDING TWO IN KHARTOUM. ONE KHARTOUM BROTHER LEADS PRAYERS ON TV; OTHER WAS SUPPORTED BY 4,000 STUDENT VOTES FROM KHARTOUM UNIVERSITY. SINCE CANDIDATES WERE NOT ALLOWED TO CITE POLITICAL, TRIBAL, SECTARIAN OR OTHER DIVISIVE POSITIONS, MOSLEM BROTHERS IDENTIFIED THEMSELVES BY QUOTING NIMEIRI'S CALL FOR ISLAMIZATION OF SUDAN. TWO PROMINENT MEMBERS OF KHATMIYYA SECT WITH PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT EXPERIENCE WERE ELECTED IN KHARTOUM.

3. ON OTHER HAND, SSU OFFICIALS WHO RAN FOR OFFICE MOSTLY LOST AND NIMEIRI IS SAID TO BE FURIOUS. SSU MADE TACTICAL ERROR OF PERMITTING OFFICIALS TO RUN BUT NOT SUPPORTING THEM EFFECTIVELY, ALTHOUGH SSU WAS IN LEGAL AND PRACTICAL POSITION TO STRONGLY INFLUENCE VOTING. OSMAN ABUL GASSIM HASHIM, COUSIN OF FIRST VICE PRESIDENT ABUL GASSIM HASHIM, NOT ONLY FAILED TO WIN HIS DISTRICT BUT GOT SACKED FROM SSU POSITION BECAUSE, RUMOR HAS IT, HE USED OFFICIAL CARS TO SEND SUPPORTERS OUT TO TEAR DOWN

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 KHARTO 00777 230542Z

OPPOSITION POSTERS. TWO CANDIDATES WHOM VP ABUL GASSIM PUBLICLY CHAMPIONED WERE DEFEATED IN GENERAL ROUT OF NIMEIRI'S FAVORITES.

4. NEW ASSEMBLY SHOULD BEGIN SOON. IN LIEU OF POLITICAL PARTIES, ASSEMBLY WILL PROBABLY COALESCE INTO DE FACTO BLOCS BASED ON KNOWN POLITICAL HISTORY OF MOST MEMBERS, I.E., FORMER PARTY AFFILIATION. PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY HAS ALWAYS BEEN ALLOWED FREEDOM OF SPEECH WHICH PUBLIC DOES NOT HEAR ABOUT AND SOME LEEWAY IN AFFECTING NIMEIRI'S POLICIES, BUT IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY IS NOT IMPORTANT PART OF SUDAN GOVERNMENT. NEW AND LESS DOCILE ASSEMBLY MAY ATTEMPT TO STRIKE BALANCE BETWEEN LOYAL COOPERATION IN RETURN FOR MORE INFLUENCE ON MAJOR ISSUES, BUT HOW THIS BARGAIN WILL DEVELOP IN PRACTICE IS UNCERTAIN. FEW SUDANESE WANT TO SEE RETURN TO BITTER PARTISAN STRIFE WHICH LED TO NIMEIRI'S TAKEOVER IN 1969, BUT MORE EXCITING LEGISLATURE IS LIKELY. MORE DEFINITIVE ANALYSIS OF IDEOLOGIES OF NEW ASSEMBLY WILL BE MADE WHEN MORE DATA HAS BEEN RELEASED.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NATIONAL ELECTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978KHARTO00777
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780083-0801
Format: TEL
From: KHARTOUM
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780229/aaaaayfq.tel
Line Count: 114
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 13272bd2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3524540
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SUDANESE ELECTIONS TO NATIONAL PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, PINS, SHUM, SU
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/13272bd2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014